

*The Christian's Exultation over Death  
and the Grave.*

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A

**S E R M O N,**

Occasioned by the DEATH of

Mrs. *ANN WETHERILL,*

Late WIFE of

Mr. *SAMUEL WETHERILL,*  
Of MILL-SHAW, near LEEDS.

Preached at MORLEY OLD CHAPEL,  
September 26, 1779.

And now published at the earnest Request of the surviving  
Relations of the Deceased,

By JAMES ASHWORTH,  
Minister of the Gospel at GILDERSOME.

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*Now Thanks be to God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ.* 2 Cor. ii. 14.

*And this is the Victory,—even our Faith.* 1 John v. 4.

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## To the R E A D E R.

**I**N order to prevent any undue reflections upon the Author of the subsequent discourse, it may not be amiss to observe, that it is now nearly seven months since it was preached, at *Morley Old Chapel*\*; and the publication of it not being called for, till within these few weeks †, it cannot reasonably be expected, that it should come out from the press, *verbatim*, as from the pulpit: More especially, when his readers are informed, that he preaches without notes. He doth write just a skeleton of his sermons, but even that very rarely, before they are preached. He hath by him, of this Discourse, a few hints of the introduction, the general division, and sub-divisions, under each proposition; so that he can promise, that the substance and sentiment of it shall be strictly adhered to. He humbly hopes, every candid reader will avoid censuring it, for not being, in all respects, the same, as when delivered; this would be next to impossible, for the above reasons: Had any wrote after him, when it was preached, it might have afforded some relief; but, it is supposed, this was not the case.

One reason, which induceth the Author to comply with the earnest request of his friends to make it

\* The Author of the following discourse was occasionally called to attend this solemn service, on account of the Rev. Mr. Morgan, the pastor of the church there, having for sometime been indisposed, and incapable of publickly officiating.

† The reason for this long silence, after the preaching of it, was, the relations of the deceased, and particularly the surviving husband, thought it would be putting the Author to too much trouble.

public, is, the affectionate reception it met with when delivered, and the edification many professed to have from it. This, then, gave him much pleasure and satisfaction; and it will greatly augment it, should it please God the Spirit, to own the publication and perusal of it to the same important and desirable end.

It is further to be observed; this Sermon was not occasioned by the death of a person broken down with age and infirmity, or worn out with many days; but by the death of one who died in her full strength, *her breasts being full of milk, and her bones moistened with marrow* \*: To teach us the uncertainty of our lives, and that we should be, therefore, also ready †.

Let it be further remarked; she died in child-bed; after having, instrumentally, given life to the infant, and the tender plant being brought forth of the womb, and lopt from the stock, a few days more clapping, the stock and root dried up, and died away; so that no more feeble shoots will ever be emitted from this substance. This may teach women in pregnancy, how precarious their lives are in such a juncture of time, and to be laying their accounts with death. It may also instruct those children thus produced, when capable of consideration, how important their lives are, which cost the lives of the mothers that brought them forth; and what care they should take of them, and how much they should be concerned to spend them in the service, and for the glory of that God who preserved them alive, as the branches, when he cut down the stocks which bare them.

As death, consequent upon sin, and the sovereign appointment of God, is common to all the sons and daughters of Adam, be it observed, that the following Discourse is not designed as a panegyric upon the de-

\* Job xxi. 24.

† Matt. xxiv. 44.

ceased,

ceased, but as a serious address, and solemn admonition, to the living, to be making due and diligent preparation for ~~it's~~ approach. The intention, therefore, of the Author is to shew, what is the fundamental cause of our acceptance with God, as fallen creatures; and likewise how it is made to appear, in the course of Divine Providence, and by the methods of grace, that we are accepted. This is of the greatest importance. He would endeavour to make use of the most cogent arguments, and the most persuasive language he is master of, in order to prevail upon his readers to make their souls everlasting interests, their principal concern. Should his end, in this respect, be obtained, his most sanguine expectations, and utmost desires in preaching, and now in printing, will be accomplished.

Whatever reception this Discourse may have with his readers, the Writer humbly hopes they will see it their duty to pray fervently for him, who thereby will esteem himself very much obliged; in hopes of which, he subscribes himself, dear readers, your precious souls

WELL-WISHER,

Affectionate Friend,

and Servant in the Gospel,

for CHRIST's Sake,

GILDERSOM, }  
April 19, 1780. }

James Ashworth.

*N. B.* It is not expected that the following Discourse, should it fall into the hands of curious critics, or persons of mere speculation in Religion, will afford them much entertainment; nor was it the design of the Author that it should. His intentions, in dependence upon the concurring influences of the Divine Spirit, are the spiritual profit and edification of the dear children of God; in conjunction with a prevailing desire, that some careless sinner may be brought to due thoughtfulness about being interested in the noble and necessary victory, which is treated of in the ensuing performance; than which, nothing is of greater importance.



The

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## The CHRISTIAN'S EXULTATION, &c.

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I CORINTHIANS XV. 55, 56, 57.

*O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

THE situation and circumstances of the children of men are peculiarly happy, who can, in their dying moments, adopt the Apostle's triumph in the words of our text. Such have their hopes full of *immortality* and *eternal life*. To these, Death doth not wear the formidable appearance of the *King of Terrors*; but of a kind messenger, who hath his mission from Heaven, to convey the heirs thereof to the possession of their inheritance. Let it be carefully remembered, that this is only the privilege of those, who have here *passed from death unto life*; or are *accepted* of God thro' *Christ*, in whom sinners only can be, and really are, *accepted*. (a) All that this world contains is not equal to this, nor can it compensate the want of it. *What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?* (b)

(a) Eph: i. 6.

(b) Mark viii. 36.

Certainly

Certainly nothing. There is nothing of the world, in value, equal to the soul.

The world, to a dying man, must, of necessity, appear of little importance. It may be painful to those who have loved it, and been incapable of relishing any pleasures, but what are limited to it, to think of being separated from it; yet, they can't but see the propriety of the Wise Man's conclusion; *Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, vanity of vanities; all bis vanity (c)*. Again, faith he, *all is vanity and vexation of spirit (d)*. To seek for happiness in this world, is a vanity emerging out of vanity itself. Vanity is inscribed upon the world's best enjoyments; and vexation of spirit upon its worst. It is really amazing, that such numbers spend so much of their precious time, in the anxious pursuit of it; and let out so much of their warm affection upon it! It is, in the solemn and awful views of eternity, *labouring for the very wind*; and the setting our hearts upon that which really is not (e). And, O how great, will the disappointment be, when their hearts must be torn from the idolized object, with, *Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee (f)*; and no longer leave them capable of running themselves out of breath, after this phantom! May God teach us all its emptiness, and engage us to seek something more substantial, durable and satisfactory!

This chapter, from which these words are selected, is, probably, one of the most excellent, comprehensive and sublime, of any in the whole volume of inspiration. It contains a compendium of all the doctrines of salvation. The Apostle here shows his beloved friends at Corinth, under the endearing appellation of Brethren, that *he declared unto them the gospel which he had preached unto them, and which they*

(c) Ecc. i. 2.

(d) Ecc. ii. 17.

(e) Ecc. v. 16.

(f) Luke xii. 20.

bad



bad received, and by which they were saved, if they kept in memory what he had delivered unto them, unless they had believed in vain. (g) The doctrine which he had preached, and with the greatest propriety, styles *The Gospel*, was, the *death, resurrection, ascension, session, and intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ*: that it is thro' his sufferings and death, that sinners are saved; and, by this grand expedient, the worst of sinners have been, and yet may be saved: for *the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin*. (b) He shews, that Christ died for, or because of our sins. (i) Then he proves, by incontestible arguments, his resurrection, from verse 4 to 21. Afterwards, he attends to the resurrection of the saints, or the mystical body of Christ, with the glorious advantages of it, from verse 21 to 55, and closeth the whole with the noble triumph in the words of our text.

I shall, by way of illustration, just touch a little upon the two first of these verses, and then confine myself unto the last; where, I apprehend, the substance of the whole is contained. Doubtless, there is included in it, both the cause of the triumph, and the triumph itself. *O death*, saith the Apostle, *where is thy sting?* Here he propounds a very interesting and important question, with heroic courage and valour. “*O death*, thou that devourest thy thousands at a “ meal, where is that, in thee, which is so hurtful “ and horrible to the truly believing soul? Thou “ hadst a sting once; but where is it now? It is cast, “ left, and lost, in the *Lord Jesus Christ*, the believer’s “ head or surety.” By death, the believer is only cast into a gentle, sweet and sound sleep, and shall take rest therein.

The insult, or challenge, is again renewed with reference to the grave. *O grave*, saith he, *where is thy victory?* “*O thou that receivest death’s victims, and, for a time, retainest them as prisoners and captives;*

(g) Vid. verses 1, 2. (b) 1 John i. 7. (i) Vid. ver. iii.

" where is thy victory? Thou art only the bed which  
 " Christ hath, by passing thro' it, made soft and  
 " sweet, or to be a place of agreeable repose." There  
 the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.  
 There the prisoners rest together, they bear not the voice of  
 the oppressor. (k) It is one thing to get, and another  
 thing to keep and maintain the victory. Here both  
 death and the grave will fail. The adorable Jesus ad-  
 dresses them both in the following manner; *I will ran-  
 som them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them  
 from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will  
 thy destruction: Repentance shall be bid from mine eyes.* (l)  
 This seems to be the very passage, which our divinely  
 inspired Apostle hath in view, in the words under  
 consideration. From it, we see, what will be the issue  
 of the extravagant boast of death and the grave to a  
 child of God. Christ, by rising, exhibits a pattern,  
 and gives a sure and pleasing earnest of the certain re-  
 surrection of all his members. *By dying he destroyed  
 him that had the power of death, that is the devil:* (m) By  
 his wonderful resurrection, he justly claims a right of  
 being *the resurrection and the life.* (n) This same Apostle  
 observes, when writing to the church at *Theffalonica,*  
*that they also which sleep in Jesus, God will bring with him  
 from the grave, in glory and triumph.* (o)

And yet death hath a sting; and the grave a vic-  
 tory; but not to hurt the believer, but the unbeliever.  
 It is added; *the sting of death is sin.* Unpardon'd sin!  
 Uncancel'd guilt! The consequence of death, to  
 one under the power of a carnal mind, is truly awful!  
 These will be amongst the goats, upon the left hand  
 of Christ the Judge, at the last tremendous day; to  
 whom he will say, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting  
 fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.* (p) Painful  
 sting this indeed! The anguish of soul they shall have,

(k) Job. iii. 17, 18. (l) Hof. xiii. 14. (m) Heb. ii. 14.  
 (n) John xi. 25. (o) 1 Theff. iv. 14.—and 2 Cor. iv. 14.  
 (p) Matt. xxv. 41.

will

will cause them to weep and gnash their teeth! (q) Yea, their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched! (r) What a sting is this! May sinners take it into due consideration, lest by continuing in sin, they eternally experience the keen and heart-piercing effects of it!

The Apostle further adds; and *the strength of sin is the law*. By which we are to understand, that sin is the transgression of the law(s); and that the law only can shew the dreadful aggravations attending it. For when the purity and spirituality of the law is once seen, and known; sin must, then, of necessity, appear *exceeding sinful*: (t) and the oftener it is repeated, the more melancholy must the state of the unhappy delinquent be. No doubt, the law, in its holiness, justness, and goodness, will be produced against the impenitent unbelieving sinner, and his violation of it be the ultimate cause of his eternal undoing. *The soul that sinneth it shall die*. Every one shall die for his own sin, and not another's. (u) Hence, the impenitent are bid to *depart*, under the character of *workers of iniquity*. (x) But, from all these awful consequences, the believer is exempted, as the Apostle makes it evidently to appear in the following verse: *but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ*: or that delivereth, and freeth us from *death's sting*, and the retained *victory and conquest of the grave*.

In further speaking from these important words, give me leave to call your attention to the subsequent method:

I. I shall attempt to point out, to you, the fundamental cause of this noble and grand triumph; that is, *God, through our Lord Jesus Christ*.

(q) Matthew xxv. 30. (r) Mark ix. 44, 46, 48.  
(s) 1 John iii. 4. (t) Rom. vii. 13. (u) Ezek. xviii. 4.  
(x) Matt. vii. 23.

II. I shall endeavour to describe the persons, who, with propriety, may adopt the apostle's triumph in the words before us.

III. I shall observe, how naturally gratitude is connected with, and results from the above premises: *Thanks, saith the Apostle, be to God, &c.* And then,

IV. and lastly, Conclude with a few words by way of application.

I. I shall attempt to point out, to you, the fundamental cause of this noble and grand triumph; that is, *God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

In the admirable cause of this triumph, there are two things worthy of our attention, viz. *First, That the essential cause of our salvation is God. And, secondly, That it is God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*First, The essential cause of this triumph is God; thanks be to God, &c.*

When the cause of this triumph is ascribed to God, we are to understand it of God the Father, against whom we had sinned; whose displeasure we had incurred; to whose holiness we were odious; and to whose wrath and indignation we were exposed.

But in what respects, with propriety, may the cause of this triumph be ascribed to God? I apprehend in the following. It is of his love:—of his wisdom: of his power:—and of his free donation. And,

i. This grand triumph originates in the love of God.

It is easy to show, that all spiritual blessings have the love of God as their origin, source, fountain, and spring. God's love to his people, is, like himself, eternal;

eternal (y); and, similar to himself, in its invariableness (z). The very gift of Christ, the grand medium; through whom salvation comes, is attributed to the inconceivable love of God (a). It is assigned as love of an astonishing kind, *that we should be called the sons of God* (b). God's love, in the matter of redemption and salvation, is esteemed the most singular, unparalleled, and incomparable (c). Nay, the very covenant of redemption itself has the love of God for its origin, (vid. *Jer. xxxi. 3.* taken in connection with verses 31, 32, 33 and 34.) Thus, it evidently appears to me, that the cause of this triumph centers in the love of God. Nor,

2. Is it less evident, that it originates in his infinite wisdom.

Let us but for a few moments consider the state in which man was created, and the obligations he was under of obedience to his adorable Creator. Let us consider him made under the law, and capable of obeying it; being as pure, spiritual, and holy as it was. Let us further attend to the awful sanction annexed to the law; *In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die* (d). Behold, after all, he eats, and thereby loseth his God, himself, his paradise, and his whole posterity. What must he now do? What can any created being do for him? Nothing but inability attends them all (e). None have wisdom enough to find out an expedient, or to plan the all-effecting scheme. No; the highest angels, in this respect, with all their capacious powers, are, comparatively, foolish, and learn wisdom from the astonishing scheme (f). Should this question have been propounded in heaven, How shall fallen man be restored to, and again enjoy the image, favour, and friend-

(y) *Jer. xxxi. 3.*

(b) *1 John iii. 1.*

(e) *Ram. v. 6..*

(z) *Mal. iii. 6.*

(c) *1 John iv. 10.*

(f) *Eph. iii. 10.—1 Pet. i. 12.*

(a) *John iii. 16.*

(d) *Gen. ii. 17.*

ship of his Creator? No doubt, profound silence would have pervaded the blissful realms. He that employed his wisdom in first forming man, must again engage it in redeeming him, or in planning the stupendous scheme; and rather than his goodness, grace, and mercy shall not shine forth with a distinguished lustre, lo, he, in his infinite wisdom, undertakes to restore ruin'd man! Who doth he fix upon? The **Lord Jesus Christ**; who, according to the ever-to-be-remembered plan, could come under the law, so as to give its required obedience; and under the curse of it, so as to endure it; and, as the happy effect thereof, the law receives its sanction, and the believing sinner a salvation, every way consistent with all the attributes and perfections of **JEHOVAH**; yea, the law doth, and must, vindicate the believer as just in being justified. And that this goeth under the idea of **Wisdom**, is evident from the following passages:—*Christ the wisdom of God.* (g) It is also termed, *his manifold wisdom.* (h) It is asserted to be *the wisdom of God in a mystery; even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory.* (i) All these portions of scripture evidently shew, that the wisdom of God is essentially concerned in this triumph.

And no less,

3. Is his power exhibited in the execution of this wonderful contrivance.

It is the almighty power of God which renders the Gospel successful:—*Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but it is God that giveth the increase.* (k) The heart is renewed by the power of God (l). Faith is wrought and planted there, by the exceeding greatness of his power (m). Nay, in prophetic language, his power is absolutely engaged to succeed all the

(g) 1 Cor. i. 24.

(h) Eph. iii. 10.

(i) 1 Cor. iii. 7.

(k) 1 Cor. iii. 6.

(l) Eph. ii. 10.

(m) Eph. i. 19, 20.

Redeemer's undertakings (*n*). The success of the Gospel depends upon the faithfulness of God. For this reason, the Gospel is termed *the power of God to salvation to every believer* (*o*). Nay, it is termed the power of God in the very abstract (*p*). Be assured, that nothing short of God's power can reach the case of the sinner, so as to remove his pride and prejudices; and to subject his heart to the honourable scheme of the Gospel, and bring his soul to possess the rich treasures of it; and it is by the power of God that believers are raised at the last day (*q*). The passages quoted above, I apprehend, have their natural meaning and genuine import. It is equally as certain,

4. That this triumph is founded upon the free donation of JEHOVAH.

Salvation is as much the gift of God, as if Christ had not died for sin. Christ's death wrought no change in the Divine will, or purpose; but only opened a way for the display of all the glorious perfections of his nature. Repentance is God's gift; *Then hath God granted, or given, to the Gentiles repentance unto life* (*r*). Faith is the gift of God; *by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:—Unto you it is given in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake* (*s*). Eternal life is the gift of God; *The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord* (*t*). The whole of what is included in the above-cited scriptures, is contained in those memorable words of the Apostle PAUL, *Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, sanctification, and redemption* (*u*).

Thus it demonstratively appears, that the cause of this triumph is GOD. This leads me,

(*n*) If. xlix. 7.      (*o*) Rom. i. 16.      (*p*) 1 Cor. i. 24.  
 (*q*) 1 Cor. vi. 14.      (*r*) Acts xi. 18.      (*s*) Eph. ii. 8, 9.  
 Phil. i. 29.      (*t*) Rom. vi. 23.      (*u*) 1 Cor. i. 30.

Secondly,

*Secondly, To observe, that it is God thro' our Lord Jesus Christ. Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory thro' our Lord Jesus Christ.*

This is capable of proof from the scriptures; to which we ought always to have recourse, both for doctrine and practice. Let the subsequent particulars be closely attended to. That it is thro' the covenant made with Christ:—His becoming the head, substitute or surety of his people:—His being responsible for them, or the conditions of the covenant devolving upon himself:—His actually discharging every obligation he brought himself under;—so as that the law was magnified;—God, as the God of justice, was satisfied; and hath signified it, by setting his broad seal to it, in raising, receiving, and admitting *our Lord Jesus Christ* to plead in the behalf of his church;—and in calling, converting, justifying, sanctifying, and glorifying them. And,

1. I observe, that this triumph is thro' the covenant made with Christ.

That the grand transactions between the Father and the Son are delivered down to us in the form of a covenant, is very plain, from the inspired volume! And, that the reciprocal engagements therein respect the redemption and salvation of sinners, is equally as evident. The *Father* insists upon the rights of his justice, and to receive satisfaction for the injury done to himself by the violation of his law. The *Lord Jesus Christ*, on his part, stipulates perfectly to perform all this. The *Father* engages by promise and oath, that in *blessing he will bless him.* (x) Here you see there is a mutual agreement, for *the covenant of peace was between them both.* (y) We read of God making *a covenant with his chosen* (z)—Of Christ being given *as a covenant*

(x) Gen. xxii. 17, 18. compared with Gal. iii. 16.

(y) Zach. vi. 13. (z) Psal. lxxxix. 3.

of the people (a) :—of the blood of his covenant (b) :—of this covenant being ordered in all things and sure (c) :—of the testament, and of the death of the testator (d) :—and of his obedience unto death, which signifies that he came under an obligation. (e) Hence the rich and ineffable blessings of grace are called the *sure mercies of David*; because they are *new-covenant mercies* (f) : and the covenant of grace, or redemption, is termed *a better covenant*, or *testament* (g). But,

2. Christ is the head, substitute, or surety of this covenant, in the behalf of his church and people; or in what he did and suffered, it was in their room, and for their advantage.

To confirm this idea, we read of his being *head over all things to his church* (b) :—*the head of his body, the church* (i) :—of his being *the surety of a better testament*, or covenant (k). This is intended when he is called the *Second Adam*, viz. That he is the second covenant head (l). And, if I am not mistaken, it is the very idea that runs through the whole of this chapter from verse 20th; as well as in *Rom. ch. v. ver. 12th* to the end; where the Apostle professedly treateth upon the two federal or covenant heads. Now, conceiving of him as the church's representative, whatever he did in that character and capacity, it was, as though the very persons themselves, whom he represented, had each of them, identically, been the performers of it; and shall be as available, in the issue and event, as if they really had. For *when he shall make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand* (m). The *First Adam* lost himself and his whole posterity, for they *all sinned in him* (n). So on the other hand, by parity of reason,

(a) *Isa. xl ix. 8.* (b) *Zach. ix. 11.* (c) *2 Sam. xxiii. 5.*  
 (d) *Heb. ix. 15, 16.* (e) *Phil. ii. 8.* (f) *1f. iv. 3.*  
*Acts xiii. 34.* (g) *Heb. vii. 22.* (b) *Eph. i. 22, 23.*  
 (i) *Col. i. 18.* (k) *Heb. vii. 22.* (l) *1 Cor. xv.*  
*45-47.* (m) *Isa. liii. 10, 11.* (n) *Rom. v. 12.*

it is as evident, that the Second *Adam* saved all his spiritual progeny, because they all obeyed and suffered in him.

There doth not appear to me any ambiguity in this reasoning. No; I apprehend it cannot but appear to every unprepossessed, unprejudiced person, to be quite natural and free, plain and familiar.

I further observe; it is through our Lord Jesus Christ,

3. Because he became responsible for his church, or that the conditions of the covenant devolved upon himself.

On this account, he is called God's Servant, because he has bound himself by solemn covenant; at the same time, that he is the sinner's Saviour (o). Let us now enquire what he was to do, in order to comport with his heavenly Father's will and good pleasure, in this view of the subject. It evidently appears to me he was to become man, or take upon him human nature (p). *For as much as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.* It behoved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren (q):—*That both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified might be all of one* (r):—*That they might be flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone.* (s) And for this reason he is said to *come in the fulness of time*; the time noted in the *divine purpose*, and in the *well-ordered covenant* (t). He is said to be *fore-ordained from before the foundation of the world, but manifested in these last times for us, who by him do believe in God* (u). All these plain passages of sacred scripture show, that the conditions of the covenant of grace devolved upon himself. I have further to remark,

(o) Isa. xlii. 1. (p) Psal. xl. 8. compared with Heb. x. 5—10. (q) Heb. ii. 14. 17. (r) Ibid. ii. 11. (s) Eph. v. 30. (t) Gal. iv. 4. (u) 1 Pet. i. 20.

4. That he discharged the obligation he brought himself under.

Being *made under the law*, and having a capacity suited to it, he obeyed it in its utmost extent. His principal was right; for he had the law of God in his heart; (x) to denote, that his heart was as perfectly pure and holy, as the law was. Indeed, if it had not, his obedience would not have answered the important end designed, and that was absolutely necessary. Our adorable *Jesus* faith, *I delight to do thy will, O God.* (y)

His outward conduct was such as the law required; *he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.* (z) *He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.* (a) None cou'd *convince him of personal sin.* (b) He was never detected in an unholy action. He faith, as his Father gave him commandment, so he did. (c) *Yea; that it was his meat and drink to do the will of his heavenly Father.* (d) *I have finish'd, saith he, the work which thou gavest me to do.* (e) In short, he kept both the first and the second table of the law; loving God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself (f). Now this is the believer's obedience to the law; for it is placed to his account, and is his eternal conformity to its moral requirements; for Christ as a public head, hath done it once for all (g). This ought to be well settled in our minds, and fixed upon our hearts. This is that very obedience, which the First *Adam* should have yielded; but which Christ, the Second *Adam*, only performed.

Yet further: He not only obeyed, but he suffered and died. This is called *his obedience unto death* (b). In the day that *Adam* eat of the forbidden fruit, he, and his whole posterity, came under the curse of the

(x) Psal. xl. 8.

(y) Psal. xl. 8.

(z) 1 Pet. ii. 22.

(a) Heb. vii. 26.

(b) John viii. 46.

(c) John xiv. 31.

(d) John iv. 34.

(e) John xvii. 4.

(f) John xiv. 31.

Acts x. 38.

(g) 2 Cor. v. ult.

(b) Phil. ii. 8.

law. Now Christ, for his church, took the curse upon himself (i). On which account, our *iniquities* are said to be *laid upon him* (k). *He bare our sins in his own body on the tree* (l). *He suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God* (m). The sword of justice had a commission to *smite him* (n). He was the *shepberd*, and *gave his life for the sheep* (o). *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity*: *He made reconciliation for iniquity* (p). He was made a *curse for us* (q). He was delivered for our *offences* (r). He was made *sin for us who knew no sin* (s). He was wounded for our *transgressions*, and bruised for our *iniquities*. *For the transgression of his people was he stricken* (t). He is our *peace*, having made *peace by the blood of his cross* (u). We are bought with a price, even with the *blood of the Son of God* (x). With this his *blood*, he made atonement for our *sins* (y). It is not of the essence of punishment, that it should be eternal; its being so, only shows the incapacity of the sufferer to make satisfaction. There was infinite worth and value in the *blood of Christ*, as there was infinite *demerit* in the sinner's *sin*. And this his *blood*, because it could atone, can, and doth *cleanse from all sin* (z). For this reason, it is compared to an opened cleansing *fountain* (a). It is upon this very account, that the Lord faith, thro' the *blood of thy covenant*, (viz. the Redeemer's covenant,) *I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water* (b). It was with this *blood*; he entered in once into the *holy place*, having obtained eternal *redemption for us* (c). He entered not into the *holy places made with hands*, but into *heaven itself*; and that by virtue of this *blood*, I am now speaking of, there

(i) Gal. iii. 13. (k) Isa. liii. 6. (l) 1 Pet. ii. 24.  
 (m) 1 Peter iii. 18. (n) Zach. xiii. 7. (o) John x. 17.  
 (p) Titus ii. 14. Daniel ix. 24. (q) Galatians iii. 13.  
 (r) Rom. iv. ult. (s) 2 Cor. v. ult. (t) Isa. liii. 5. 8.  
 (u) Mic. v. 5. Eph. ii. 14. Col. i. 20. (x) 1 Cor. vi. 20.  
 Acts xx. 28. (y) Rom. v. 11. (z) 1 John i. 7.  
 (a) Zach. xiii. 1. (b) Zach. ix. 11. (c) Heb. ix. 12.

to appear in the presence of God for us (d). How full are all these gracious and glorious assertions, respecting this fundamental article of the Christian faith!

The sufferings and death of Christ are represented to us of a *vicarious* nature, or in the room of his church, who were liable to, and must, of course, have fallen under them, had he not sustained the stroke (e). For this reason, he is called the Mediator; or one that acts between God and sinners, and brings those opposite parties together, which, before, were at variance (f). As the happy effect of what is noted above, God can be just in justifying the believing soul, according to the riches of his grace in salvation (g). Yea, here *mercy and truth meet together; righteousness and peace embrace each other* (h). In Christ crucified, all the attributes and perfections of the divine nature shine forth, with a peculiarly pleasing lustre. How ineffably great doth the love of God appear!—How extensive his wisdom!—How inflexible his justice!—How large the display of his mercy! How inviolable his truth!—How amazing his power! How distinguished his goodness!—How matchless his tenderness, pity, and compassion! Verily, the gospel, with the greatest propriety, may be termed *the glorious gospel of the blessed God* (i).

Thus, you see, the law was magnified, and made honourable: And it will be easy to prove that God was well pleased and satisfied (speaking after the manner of men) with what Christ did and suffered (k). His glorious resurrection is pregnant with proof of it. And hence he is termed the *Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead* (l). He is said to be *raised again for our justification*; or that we might be fully satisfied, that he was

(d) Heb. ix. 24. (e) Gal. iii. 10. comp. with verse 13.  
 (f) 1 Tim. iii. 5. Heb. ix. 15. (g) Isa. xlv. 21.—  
 Rom. iii. 26. (h) Psal. lxxxv. 10. (i) 1 Tim. i. 10.  
 (k) Isa. xliii. 21. (l) Rom. i. 4.

the

the true Messiah, and accepted (m). He entered the grave like a captive, or prisoner; but, lo, he springs forth like a glorious, vigorous, and triumphant conqueror! (n) He was said to be *crucified thro' weakness*; but he *liveth by the power of God* (o). It is quite evident that the Apostle lays a very great stress upon the resurrection of Christ. He saith, *If Christ be not risen, we are yet in our sins*, and must die in them (p). Hear his challenge. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died: Yea, rather that is risen again* (q). Doth it not evidently appear, that the term, *Yea, rather that is risen again*, is very emphatical?

His ascension into heaven is another proof, that God is well pleased with him, as his people's surety.

Our Lord saith, *I go to the Father, and ye see me no more* (r). The heavens have received him, *i. e.* with complacency, until the restitution of all things (s). Heaven's portals are commanded to expand, to admit Christ the King of Zion, and of glory (t). He is gone to heaven, as our fore-runner (u).

His session at God's right-hand is of a similar nature.

Observe, what notice the Apostle takes of it. *Who is even at the right-hand of God* (x): which is the hand of favour and of power. The sheep are said to be placed upon the right-hand of Christ, the Judge (y). For why? but to denote his affection for them, and his determinate purpose to preserve and defend them. When a person has had some singular interposition of God's providence, that hath been expressive of his favour, and complacential regard, he is said to have held them *by their right-hand* (z). And to exhibit

(m) Rom. iv. ult. (n) Acts ii. 24. (o) 2 Cor. xiii. 4.  
 (p) 1 Cor. xv. 14—17. (q) Rom. viii. 33, 34. (r) John xvi. 10.  
 (s) Acts iii. 21. (t) Psal. xxiv. 7—10. (u) Heb. vi. ult.  
 (x) Rom. viii. 34. (y) Matt. xxv. 33. (z) Psal. lxxiii. 23.

peculiar

peculiar and distinguishing favour to the Lord Jesus Christ, he, *i. e.* God the Father, is said to have *exalted him with his own right-hand* (*a*) ; and Jesus is said to be sat down at the right-hand of God (*b*).

His intercession is equally expressive of the finished nature of his work ; his advocacy is founded upon it (*c*). He looks like a lamb that had been slain (*d*). The sweet anthem sung in heaven, centers here (*e*). Paul saith, *He is, therefore, able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us* (*f*). The Jews were always afraid of their high-priest being struck dead, when he went into the Holy of Holies ; to relieve them against their fears, he had bells at the skirts of his long robes, that whilst he was in motion, they might know he lived (*g*) : So the Apostle saith, *he, i. e. Jesus, ever liveth, as our High-priest, to make intercession for us*. The Father admits him. Our inspired Apostle, when writing to the Romans, saith, *Who also maketh intercession for us* (*h*). The beloved apostle John saith, *We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous*, who pleads his propitiatory sacrifice for the removal of fresh-contracted guilt (*i*). Paul again adds, *Having a High-priest over the house of God*, who atoned on earth, and is now carrying on his sacerdotal office in heaven, by intercession, *let us draw near, &c.* (*k*) And, because we have such a tender and compassionate High-priest, he exhorts us to *come boldly to the throne of grace*, having an accepted pleader there (*l*). All these remarks appear to me, as so many conclusive proofs of Christ's finished work.

It is further rendered evident, by the descent of the Sacred Spirit, and his renewing of, and residing in the hearts of the fallen race ; in making them

(*a*) *Acts v. 31.*    (*b*) *Heb. i. 3.—xii. 2.*    (*c*) *1 John ii. 2.*  
 (*d*) *Rev. v. 6—10.*    (*e*) *Rev. v. 9.*    (*f*) *Heb. vii. 25.*  
 (*g*) *Exod. xxviii. 33—35.*    (*h*) *Rom. viii. 34.*    (*i*) *1 John ii. 1.*  
 (*k*) *Heb. x. 21.*    (*l*) *Heb. iv. 15, 16.*

meet

meet for, and bring them to the enjoyment of eternal bliss and glory.

Thus God hath, and still doth set his broad seal to the finished nature of Christ's work. His accepting of sinners to favour and friendship, through him, is a continued proof of this.

Thus, you see, the ground of the triumph is of God thro' Christ. Sin, death, the grave, and hell, are all vanquished and overcome by Christ, thro' the sovereign appointment of the God of justice, wisdom, love, and power.

I pass on now in the

II. Place, to point out the persons, who, with propriety, may adopt the Apostle's triumph in the words of my text.

The Scripture is not silent about this momentous affair. It describes them in such a manner, that, if they are not a-wanting to themselves, they may know their own features, and see their own complexion. *The word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, of the joint and marrow; and is a dis- cerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (m).*

If we are possessed of the following qualifications, we may, from them, draw a safe conclusion that we are interested in Christ's death, and that we have cause to triumph over both death and the grave, thro' the atoning blood, and righteousness, of the Lord Jesus Christ.

If we are *born again*;—are the subjects of *repentance unto life*;—have *the faith of the operation of God*;—and are possessed of vital holiness.

If these things be in us, and abound, our evidences must, of necessity, be conspicuous that we are the *sons of God*, and the *heirs of eternal bliss and glory*. But

(m) Heb. iv. 12.

he that is destitute of them, can never make out his title to heaven;—will never have a meetness for it;—shall never come there;—and, consequently, death, and the grave will gain, and maintain their victory; especially death, in the most horrible idea of it, and the most affecting import of that soul-humbling term:

I observe,

*First*, If we are born from above, we shall come at our evidence of having a right to this triumph.

Our Lord saith, *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God (n)*; and, consequently, he cannot triumph over death, and the grave. Having argued the point a little further, he saith, *Ye must be born again*; to denote the absolute necessity of it (o). The Apostle saith, *Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature (p)*. It is of little importance, whether we be Jews, or Gentiles, if we have not *new hearts*, we are nothing in religion. If we do not in time *pass from death to life*, death will for ever have dominion over us. This is a spiritual change wrought in the heart. A person possessed of it, is said to be *spiritual, or spiritually minded (q)*; which discovers the spiritual, or holy principles implanted in his heart. This clearly points out the agent which produceth, or effects this change, namely, the Spirit of God. For this reason, the regenerate are said *to be born of the spirit (r)*. The Holy Spirit, without doubt, generates, or communicates his own nature or image. The Saints are called God's workmanship, to evince the necessity of an omnipotent power to effect it (s). They are said *to be passed from death unto life; from darkness to light*; to shew the greatness and sensibility of this change (t). And to teach us the excellency

(n) John iii. 3. (o) Ibid. ver. 7. (p) Gal. vi. 15.

(q) Rom. viii. 6. (r) John iii. 8. (s) Eph. ii. 10.

(t) Eph. v. 8.—1 Peter ii. 9.—1 John iii. 14.

and extensiveness of it, those, who are the subjects thereof, are stiled *new creatures* (u). Till this is the case, we are carnal; under the power and prevalence of corrupt principles, which are *enmity against God* (w). We are in the flesh, and *cannot please God*. In short, we neither have, nor ever can have any true, real, vital religion, without regeneration; and this shews its necessity; and, that we cannot triumph over death, and the grave, whilst this is our condition.

The evidence of being born of God is to *seek those things which are above, where Jesus sitteth at God's right-hand* (x). What comes from God, leads to him. Certainly, if we are sons of God, we shall cry, *Abba, Father* (y). *Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Father, Father* (z). Children must love, and take pleasure in holding converse with their parents. If your hearts are in heaven, your birth is from thence (a).

I observe,

*Secondly, If you are possessed of repentance unto life, then may you triumph over both death, and the grave.*

Till the soul is brought to be truly humbled before God, on account of its sinfulness and vileness, it may be said to be in rebellion against him. This temper is daring; and the issue of it must be distressing. Our Lord saith, *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.* (b) This shews the necessity of it; and, that without it, you cannot adopt the Apostle's triumph.

This repentance is always the happy fruit and effect of regeneration, and gives proof of its reality. That sorrow, or distress, that persons may have, because something pinches them, as in the case of Pha-

(u) 2 Cor. v. 17.

(y) Rom. viii. 15.

(b) Luke xiii. 3, 5.

(w) Rom. viii. 7.

(x) Gal. iv. 6.

(a) Matt. vi. 21.

raob, is not godly sorrow, or *repentance unto life*. Let but their pain be removed, they can, then, be reconciled to their sin. Nor is the sorrow that may arise, because my sins expose me to the wrath of God, and lay me under a painful apprehension of hell, and damnation, *repentance unto life*: No. Nature itself may effect this. The repentance which I have in view, and call *repentance unto life*, flows from spiritual life in the soul; and from a spiritual perception of the purity and holiness of God's law; which is the transcript of his moral perfections;—a cordial love to it,—and a sight of the exceeding sinfulness of sin:—the filthiness of our own hearts and natures; so as that when we compare ourselves with the purity and perfection of the law, we say we are *carnal*, (c) or judge ourselves to be most filthy and abominable: and, on account of the *law in our members, warring against the law of our minds*, we feel ourselves *wretched*. (d) *We loath ourselves in our own sight*. (e) With the prodigal, we confess our sins. (f) With the publican, we say, *God, be merciful to us, sinners*. (g) With *David* we cry, (because of our apprehended filthiness) *Purge us with hyssop, and we shall be clean; wash us, and we shall be whiter than snow*. (h) With *Epbraim*, we are confounded, because we see ourselves. (i) With *Isaiab*, we are *undone*, because we have *seen the King, the Lord of Hosts*. (k)

These humiliating effects will always attend the soul, whilst it has the least motion of sin in it. (l) Tho' God, thro' Christ, be reconciled to such a soul, it can never be reconciled to itself, whilst this is the case.

Now, my dear friends, what do you know of this repentance? See it finely delineated by an inspired pen, 2 Cor. vii. 11. Nothing but the Spirit of God can effect such repentance as this; and, if you have

(c) Rom. vii. 14. (d) Vid. ver. 24. (e) Ez. xxxvi. 31.  
(f) Luke xv. 18, 19. (g) Luke xviii. 13. (b) Ps. li. 7.  
(i) Jer. xxxi. 18, 19. (k) Is. vi. 5. (l) Rom vii. 24.

it, you have the *earnest of the Spirit in your hearts.* (m) Should these be the circumstances attending your souls, you may triumph over both death, and the grave.

I have yet further to add,

*Thirdly, If we have the faith of the operation of God, then may we adopt this triumph.*

*Without faith it is impossible to please God. (n)* Only he that believeth shall be saved. He that believeth not shall be damned; whatever he imagines to the contrary. (o) It is only he that believeth, that hath *eternal life; he that believeth not, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him for ever.* (p) But what is this faith? It is more than a bare assent to revealed truths. It is more than the faith of devils. It is more than the faith which apostates have. He that hath a true living faith, shall eventually be saved: The word of invariable truth asserts it. (q) *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the word of God abideth in its purity, permanency, and veracity, and must exist for ever.* (r) This faith, which I am speaking of, is called *the faith of the operation of God;* because God the spirit is the worker and the effector of it in the heart; for it is *with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.* (s) This faith affects the whole soul, in all its powers. It is said to *work by love;* (t) by love to God;—to Christ;—to the Holy Spirit;—to the word of God;—to the house, and ordinances of God;—to the people of God;—yea, to our very enemies. (u) It is a supernatural grace, and can, and doth produce supernatural effects. A manifest proof may be given of it, by the works, or fruits, it produceth. God is said to *purify the hearts of the Jews* by it, and of the *Gentiles* thro' it. (x) *Show*

(m) 2 Cor. v. 5.

(n) Heb. xi. 6.

(o) Mark xvi. 16.

(p) John iii. 36.

(q) John v. 24.

(r) Matt. v. 18.—

1 Peter i. 25.

(s) Col. ii. 12.—Rom. x. 10.

(t) Gal. v. 6.

(u) Matt. v. 44.

(x) Acts xv. 9.—Rom. iii. 30.

me, saith James, thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works (y).

If you wou'd have a full definition of this faith, as it respects the Lord Jesus Christ, it is the sinner's conception of his own guilty condemned state before God; and from the views he hath of the fulness, freeness, suitableness, and all-sufficiency of Christ, he fleeth to him, receiveth, and resteth upon him, and him alone, as *the only name given under heaven whereby he can be saved* (z). Thus believing, he is *justified from all things, from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses.* (a) The spirit of God thus *takes of the things of Christ, and shows them to the soul, and enables her to apprehend, and to be satisfied with them* (b). The believer will say, "None but Christ; none but Christ, for me." He reckons every thing in competition with him, but *dross, and dung* (c). The life that he liveth in the flesh, he liveth by *the faith of the Son of God, who loved him, and gave himself for him* (d). In this situation, God feeth no stain of guilt in the justified, because Christ hath atoned for all their sins, and thro' his atonement hath made *reconciliation for all their iniquities*; and it is by his *stripes they are healed* (e). So saith the Apostle John, *If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins; or the sin-atoning sacrifice, thro' which mercy is dispensed, or God discovers himself propitious* (f). This is what, I apprehend, the Scriptures mean by faith or believing. If we have this faith, we may adopt the Apostle's triumph. But he that is found destitute of true faith, whatever his sentiments in other respects may be, he must not, he cannot share in the triumph of this victory; for this is the victory,—even our faith. (g)

(y) James ii. 18.

(z) Acts iv. 12.

(a) Acts xiii. 39.

(b) John xvi. 14.

(c) Phil. iii. 8.

(d) Gal. iii. 20.

(e) Isaiah liii. 5.—Daniel ix. 24.

(f) 1 John ii. 12.

(g) 1 John v. 4.

I only once more,

*Fourthly*, observe, He that is possessed of vital holiness may adopt the triumph in my text.

It ought ever to be remembered, that *without holiness no man shall see the Lord (b)*. Only the *pure in heart* can see, and enjoy God (i). *Holiness becometh the house of the Lord for ever (k)*.—All these scriptures show the absolute necessity of this qualification for heaven and glory.

But, methinks, I hear some one saying, What is this holiness? I answer; More than to profess to have it; for this may be the case, where the thing professed is not possessed, or enjoyed: As in the case of the foolish virgins (l). It is more than the appearance of it; for this may be, where the reality of it is not. Some sit, and stand, and hear, as God's people do; but they do not come up with them in their activity (m). It is more than a theoretical knowledge of it. This may be, where the thing thus known doth not influence, as the genuine existence of vital holiness doth (n).

But it is, in some degree, the image of God really restored to the soul (o). It commenced in their regeneration; and, from that state of infancy, hath been growing up towards maturity, in the use of divinely-appointed means, and by the sanctifying influences of God's Spirit attending them (p). New-born babes of grace grow by the sincere milk of the word (q). Sanctification is a progressive work. It was the design of God's love;—of Christ's death;—and of the Holy Spirit's application thereof, to restore fallen man to the image of his Maker (r). The grand intention of the covenant of grace, with respect to the

(b) Heb. xii. 14. (i) Matt. v. 8. (k) Psa. xciii. 5.

(l) Matthew xxv. 8—10. (m) Ezekiel xxxiii. 30—32.

(n) Psal. xcii. 12—15. Matt. vii. 18. (o) Eph. iv. 24.—

Col. iii. 10. (p) Eph. iv. 11—13. (q) 1 Pet. ii. 2.

(r) Eph. i. 3, 4. Chap. v. 25—27. 1 Cor. vi. 11.

covenantees,

covenantees, was, that the law of God might be written in their hearts, and put into their inward parts ; that God might be their God, and they his people (s). This is what David longed for : *As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness ; then shall I be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness* (t). The amiable Paul pressed towards this mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (u) : namely, the perfection of his nature. He groaned, under the pressure of a body of sin, and death, for deliverance : i. e. for purity and holiness (x). The apostle John saith, *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be ; but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is.* (y) It appears evident to me, that it was the desire of the people, to whom he wrote, both to be like him, and with him ; and here John shews that it should be according to their will and wish. There, we shall have every desirable enjoyment and full satisfaction. If we have him that is all things ; with him we must of course possess all things. If believers, we must have God, for our God, (for we are heirs of him (z),) who is all things ; therefore, with him, we shall enjoy all things.

O glorious state ! O bleſſ'd abode !

We ſhall be near and like our God !

And flesh and ſin no more controul

The ſacred pleasures of the foul.

There ſhall we ſee, and hear, and know,

All we desir'd or wiſh'd below,

And all our powers find ſweet employ

In that eternal world of joy.

WATTS.

Be assured, that without meetness for heaven, there neither will, nor ever can be any admittance into it. (a) Nay, further ; know, that without holiness, you could

(s) Jer. xxxi. 33. Heb. viii. 10.  
(u) Phil. iii. 14. (x) Rom. vii. 24.

(z) Rom. viii. 17. (a) Rev. xxi. 27.

(t) Psal. xvii. 15.  
(y) 1 John iii. 2.

not

not be happy in heaven. Further still; without it, you do not desire to come there, because it is holy; and, if so, in effect, you do not desire it at all. Many could wish to go to heaven, as a place of happiness, according to their notion of it; but this has nothing supernatural in it at all. Every one wants to be happy. But the child of God longs to go to heaven, because of its purity and holiness. *David, Paul, and John*, are all of them evidences of this. (b) Now all these have victory begun: they are at present delivered from spiritual death: and tho' they are not exempted from a corporal one, yet, even that will be their gain: And this *last enemy* shall be destroyed, and cast into the *lake of fire* (c); for their Redeemer must reign until all *bis*, and their *enemies be put under his feet* (d). Then shall their bodies be rais'd, clothed with immortal vigor, and glory; and death itself be swallowed up in complete victory (e.) Then comes on the triumphant challenge in the words of our text.

The wicked shall be raised, but it must be to *shame and everlasting contempt* (f); but the righteous to everlasting life, glory, and triumph; for the *upright* must have *dominion in the morning* of the resurrection (g). They shall there have a body *like to Christ's glorious body*, their ever-glorious head (h). O! this is victory worthy of our highest exultation and triumph! If you, my dear friends, are possessed of this holiness, you will have that honour, which is peculiar to all the saints (i), namely, to emerge out of all these inconveniences, to enjoy solid good, and eternal repose.

Having discussed the second proposition, I proceed to the next general head:

(b) Psal xvii. 15. Phi. iii. 14. 1 John iii. 2.

(c) Rev. xx. 14. (d) 1 Cor. xv. 25. (e) Vid. ver. 42—54.

(f) Dan. xii. 2.

(g) Psal. xlix. 14.

(h) Phil. iii. 21.

(i) Psal. cxlix. 9.

III. To shew you, how naturally gratitude is connected with, and results from, the above premisses. *Thanks be to God, saith our Apostle, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

We never want matter for thankfulness, and therefore should *bless the Lord at all times.* (k) We often want a heart for praise, but never just cause for it. The common mercies of life demand our constant praise (l): if so, what must the choicest blessings which sovereign grace imparts? Such are those which give birth and being to this noble doxology. They are God's greatest favours, and he should have our highest praise.

It must be observed, that our warmest adoration adds nothing to his essential glory. No: He is perfect. Nor can our most lofty praise reach the height of his excellency. He is exalted far *above all blessing and praise* (m). Yet a gracious, must of necessity, be a grateful heart. Gratitude is a duty required. And, speaking after the manner of men, he that chearfully offers this tribute *glorifieth God* (n). We are commanded *in every thing to give thanks* (o). Then, surely, things which are of the most extraordinary nature, and excellent kind, such as the victory under consideration includes, should strike our highest strings, and raise our most lofty notes, in this pleasing exercise. Here the enraptur'd Apostle sets us the amiable example, with *Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory thro' our Lord Jesus Christ.*

In the preceding part of this chapter, the Apostle attends to the melancholy circumstances that the church would certainly have been in, could it not have been proved that Christ was risen. Then, saith he, *are we yet in our fins*, and must, of necessity, die in them, and endure the sad consequences of them for

(k) Psal. xxxiv. 1.

(l) 1 Thess. v. 18.

(m) Neh. ix. 5.

(n) Psal. v. 23.

(o) 1 Thess. v. 18.

ever (p). But as a glorious antidote against the fear of this, he comes, in verse the 20th, to assert the all-important truth in terms the most positive, pleasing, and indubitable, *but now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.*

Afterwards he attends to the heart-exhilarating effects hereof. Such as death being disarm'd of its terror, the sting being drawn; the grave deprived of its victory, Christ having burst its bands; he finds gratitude spring up in his breast, rising higher and higher, like the waters in *Ezekiel's vision* (q); till, similar to *Jordan* in the time of harvest (r), it overflows in these generous emanations, or strains of praise, *Thanks be to God, &c.*

*First,* Thanks be to God for the wonderful displays of his love;—the admirable discoveries of his wisdom;—the well-concerted scheme. Do I survey the perfections of the divine nature? O how harmonious are they in conspiring my good; so as to captivate my whole soul with their charming appearance; and leave me nothing of a terrific nature to apprehend from them, but every thing valuable and entertaining to expect! Do I reflect upon my misery? There I see, and obtain mercy! Do I consider my imbecility? Behold, here is grace, all-sufficient grace, for every time of need! Do I take a view of my spiritual enemies? Lo, they are all vanquished and overcome! *Thanks be to God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ* (s). Yea, such is the happy and privileged condition of the believer, that all things are his, because he is Christ's (t). In this celestial employ, the Apostle hath very honourable company: as, *Moses* the servant of God;—the royal Psalmist, or *man after God's own heart*;—and the evangelical prophet *Isaiab* (u); in conjunction with all the dear

(p) Verse 17. (q) Ezek. xlvi. 3—7. (r) Jas. iii. 15.

(s) 2 Cor. ii. 14. (t) 1 Cor. iii. 21. (u) Exod. xv.—

Ps. xxxiv. & ciii.—Isa. xl ix. 13. & lxi. 10.

children

children of God. The whole word of God, so far as it respects the conduct of the saints towards him, when they view redemption, abounds in this pleasing and animated strain.

Secondly, He would thank God for his Christ. He would bless God for his life, his death, and all the subsequent blessings thereof. *Thanks, faith he, be to God for his unspeakable gift (x).* *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, in Christ (y);* or, *Blessed be God for Christ, thro' whom these blessings come.* And the Apostle Peter joins him herein, with *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead (z).* O! how amazingly precious is Christ to the believing soul! (a) What astonishing fulgence and splendour appear in this love of God manifested in Christ (b). The gracious soul, thro' believing, rejoiceth with joy unspeakable and full of glory (c). In Christ's death, believers see the death of sin; and in his state of glory, their glory. They are become dead to the law, and, consequently, to sin, by the body of Christ; and are virtually sat down with him in heavenly places (d). What discoveries are these! Oh, how animating! *Thanks be to God for them.* Again,

Thirdly, *Thanks be to God for the gospel;* that he fixed the bounds of my habitation, where it was (e); and permitted me to be brought forth in a time, when I might enjoy what many have longed and waited for, but were never privileged with. Blessed are my eyes, for they see, and my ears, for they hear it (f). Oh, it is a joyful sound: yea, it is truly glad

(x) 2 Cor. ix. 15. (y) Eph. i. 3. (z) 1 Pet. i. 3.  
 (a) 1 Pet. ii. 7. (b) John iii. 16. (c) 1 Pet. i. 8.  
 (d) Rom. vii. 4.—Eph. ii. 6. (e) Acts xvii. 26.  
 (f) Matt. xiii. 16, 17.

tidings (g). It is that grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ! It is God speaking in these last times by his son! (b) *He hath not dealt so with every nation!* His gospel, in this large extent, hath not been in former ages, nor is it in the present, in all places, so freely and uninterruptedly enjoyed. *O, my soul, praise thou the Lord (i).* Thanks be to God for the gospel; for in it we are come to Mount Zion, the city of the living God (k). Again,

Fourthly, Thanks be to God, will the gracious soul say, that the gospel came to me, not in word only, but in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance (l). Oh, blessed be God, that ever I knew a day of divine power, and was made willing to embrace this glorious Saviour, and brought to experience this precious salvation! (m)—That ever I knew the joyful sound; and was favoured with the light of God's countenance! (n)—That ever he called me by his grace; made me to hear his voice and live! (o)—That ever he revealed his Son in my guilty, filthy, and polluted heart the hope of glory; and filled my hopes full of immortality and eternal life! (p)—That ever I was brought to approve these things, more excellent than the trifles of time!—That ever I was made to know this more excellent way! (q) *What shall I render to my God for all these favours?* (r) What can I render to him? Here, Lord, accept of a willing mind, the tribute that a grateful heart would give. Thanks be to thy name for these astonishing favours! Again,

Fifthly, Thanks be to God, for the hope laid up in heaven. Bless the Lord, O my soul, for the sweet fore-tastes thereof:—For the heart-reviving preliba-

(g) Psal. lxxxix. 15.—Luke ii. 10. (b) John i. 17.—  
Heb. i. 2. (i) Psal. cxlvii. 19, 20. (k) Heb. xiii. 22—24.  
(l) 1 Thess. i. 5. (m) Psal. cx. 3. (n) Ps. lxxxix. 15.  
(o) Gal. i. 15.—John v. 25. (p) 2 Tim. i. 10.  
(q) Phil. i. x.—1 Cor. xii. 31. (r) Psal. cxvi. 12.

tions

tions of it!—For the *earnest of it in my heart* (s).—For the sure promises of it.—For the faithfulness of God to perform them. That this hope is laid up in heaven (t); where no thief can approach to deprive me of it (u).—That Christ appears there, in my nature, for me (x); for the full assurance, *that being dead with him, I shall reign with him* (y):—*that when he shall appear, I shall be like him*:—nay, that *I shall appear with him in glory* (z). Oh, thanks be to God, for all the sweet supports derived, in the midst of all the trials and inconveniences of this present life, from the certain expectation that it will not be always thus! (a) Blessed be God, that there is a *remaining rest for his people* (b). And, O thanks to his name, that I can reckon, *that the sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in me!* (c) For enabling me to be a *stranger and a pilgrim* upon earth; having my desires fixed upon, and my course tending towards, this *better country* (d). Oh, blessed be the riches of grace, that when this hope, which is laid up in heaven, shall be enjoyed, it will consummate my utmost wishes and desires! *Then shall I be satisfied* (e). There I shall have perfect freedom from all the remains of corruption (f). No more to groan under the pressure of a body of sin and death (g).—No more to be in danger of offending my good God, whom I even now so dearly love.—No more to be tempted to depart from him; or ever experience a coldness, or dulness, pervading my heart. Where I shall have the perfection of my nature. That which is *in part*, *shall* then be for ever *done away*; and that which is *perfect*, compleatly *come*. Where I shall enjoy myself, my God, and all the celestial company to all eternity; and be *ever, ever*,

(s) 2 Cor. i. 22.

(t) Tit. i. 2.

(u) Matth. vi. 20.

(x) Heb. ix. 24.

(y) 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.

(z) 1 John iii. 2.

Col. iii. 4.

(a) 2 Cor. iv. 16—18.

(b) Heb. iv. 9.

(c) Rom. viii. 18.

(d) Heb. xi. 13, 16.

(e) Ps. xvii. 15.

(f) 1 Cor. xiii. 10, 12.

(g) 2 Cor. v. 2, 4.

ever with the Lord! (b) Having such hope, I faint not (i). Thanks be to God, for these pleasing views.

I now proceed, as proposed, in the

IV. And last place, to conclude with a few words, by way of application.

Know then, my dear brethren, whoever you are, that you must die; and that probably you may die soon. That you need a heart-application of the blood of Christ, in order to be capable of joining in this triumph, and of sharing in the pleasure and happiness of it. If you have it, be thankful to God for it: If our dying friends were possessed of it, how should it reconcile us to their death and departure?—How should it stir us up to follow them in their faith and patience?—And soon we shall overtake them, and be ever with the Lord.

First, Know, that you must die; and that, very probably, you may die soon.

Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return, was the original threatening (k). It is appointed to men once to die; and it is in vain for any to hope for an exemption from it (l). The seeds of mortality are sown in our constitutions, and they never fail of producing a harvest, which is reaped down by death. Observation teacheth this soul-humbling truth. Our Fathers, where are they? The Prophets, they don't live for ever (m). The Patriarchs and Apostles are dead. Many of our relations are gone off the stage of time. The solemn occasion of this discourse shows, that the sovereign appointment of God still prevails; yea, and it will continue its sovereign empire, till Christ's second coming, and, then, death itself shall be destroyed (n). No circumstances that can attend our state here be-

(b) 1 Thess. iv. 17. (i) 2 Cor. iv. 16. (k) Gen. iii. 19.  
(l) Heb. ix. 27. (m) Zac. i. 5. (n) 1 Cor. xv. 26.

low, will secure us from death's arrest. No ; might any expect an exemption, surely it would be the dear children of God ; but if *Christ be in them*, or they have interest in his atoning blood, *their bodies are dead because of sin* (o). They must pass thro' the grave, and see corruption. But, let it ever be remembered, that even death itself is *theirs*, and will be *their eternal gain* (p). It is only a sleep to them, and will afford a salutary rest to their weary bodies,

And, as it appears evident that we must die ; so it is equally as probable that we may die soon, for any thing that we can know to the contrary. Our lives always hang in doubtful suspense. The great and blessed God, in the volume of inspiration, hath condescended to teach us the brevity and uncertainty of our lives, by the most expressive figures. Comparing them to an expeditious post, who conveys, and re-conveys, intelligences from one stage to another ; to teach us, that with equal swiftness, we shall come to the destined period of our lives (q). They are resembled to *the swift ships*, or the ships that come from the more warm to the colder climates, laden with the first ripe fruits ; that both a lucrative mind, and a voluptuous appetite, may be gratified. For which end, each ship's master, stimulated with the hope of gain, will crowd all his sail, and use every invention, to come first to the destin'd port, to find a good market, and that his fruits may command an advanced price. So we are moving, with the greatest velocity, over the sea of life, to the appointed port of death. They are also likened to *an eagle*, which hath been mounting aloft, and exercising her piercing eye, to spy out her prey ; and she has no sooner beheld it, than she wings her course with rapid speed, that her hungerstung appetite may be satiated (r). Our days upon earth, have a similar celerity attending them. They are com-

(o) Rom. viii. 10.

(p) 1. Cor. iii. 21.—Phi. i. 21.

(q) Job ix. 25.

(r) Vid. verse 26.

pared to a *weaver's shuttle*, which speedily crosses the threads of the shead (s). Also to a feeble and soon-fading *flower*. To a *shadow*, that *passeth away* with the rapid whirl of the spheres (t). They are said to be but a *hand's breadth* (u). They are represented by a *wind that passeth away*, or that we emit from our mouths (x). Also our lives are said to be *grass*, that *grows up in the morning*, and is *cut down at night* (y). Yea, they are compared to a very vapour which *appeareth for a little while*, and *soon vanisheth away* (z). How striking are these images ! May we not say, *What are our lives ?* What dependance can we have upon our own lives, or the lives of others ? Do not these scriptures, in effect, plainly say, *Dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one ?* (a) Or, in other words, *Cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils ; for wherein is he to be accounted of* (b). Should not these considerations cause us to be indifferent to present things, because *the time is short* ? Should they not teach us, *tho' we have wives, to be as tho' we had none* ? and if *we weep, to be as tho' we wept not* ? and if *we rejoice, as tho' we rejoiced not* ? and if *we buy, as tho' we possessed not* ? and to *use this world, as not abusing it* ; because *the fashion of this world passeth away* ? (c) Do they not teach us, not to presume upon future time ? not to *boast of to-morrow* ? (d) Where is to-morrow ? For ought we know, with respect to ourselves, it may be in eternity ! Should we not be laying our accounts with death in every thing, and in all our connections ? Should they not teach us, not to be surprized that our relations and friends die so soon ; but rather to turn our astonishment into another channel, viz. that they live so long ? Should they not admonish us to be getting ready for so solemn, and, which may be, so awfully sudden a change ?

(s) Job vii. 6. (t) Job xiv. 2. (u) Psal. xxxix. 5.  
 (x) Psal. lxxviii. 39. (y) Psal. xc. 5, 6. (z) Jas. iv. 14.  
 (a) Job xiv. 3. (b) Isa. ii. 22. (c) 1 Cor. vii. 29.  
 (d) Luke xii. 19.—Prov. xxvii. 1.

This

This leads me,

Secondly, To observe, That we need a heart-application of the blood of Christ, in order to a readiness for this change, or to be capable of sharing in this triumph.

A sense of this, may serve to cure us of a presumptive confidence, whilst we are strangers to the *grace of God in truth* (e). If we are not ourselves *born again*, we *cannot enter into the kingdom of God* (f). If we are not *converted, and become as little children*; *we shall in no wise be admitted* (g). A new nature is as necessary as the blood of Christ. A meetness for heaven is as requisite as a title. I mean, by an application of the blood of Christ, virtually, to partake of the saving effects of it; having a present freedom from the guilt of our sin, by faith in this all-atonning blood; and, as a conclusive proof of it, power against the reign and dominion of sin in our hearts and lives; or, in other words, that sin (as sin) be hated by us, and that it be our abhorred burden. Sin should always be the object that our hearts are irreconcilably set against (h). Be assured, that if we are under the sanctifying influences of God's grace and spirit, this will be the case with us: for *sin shall not have dominion over a soul, under the reign of grace* (i). In short, either we must die to sin here, or we must die eternally for sin hereafter; or be *banished from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power* (k). It remains a solid and substantial truth, that an unapplied Christ saveth none. By Christ being applied, is intended a soul's application to, reception of, and resting upon him; or, to be called, justified, sanctified, or made holy;—to have a suitableness in our nature for the enjoyment of a perfectly holy God, and a pure and spiritual heaven, so as to be solaced with it. See to this, my

(e) Col. i. 6. (f) John iii. 3. (g) Matt. xviii. 3.  
(b) Rom. vii. 15—20. (i) Rom. vi. 14. (k) 2 Thess. i. 9.

dear friends ; it respects your own personal experience. Know, that you need Jesus. Be assured, that you are for ever undone without a personal interest in him. Be encouraged to apply to him. He casteth out none that come unto him, whatever they have been, or, according to their own apprehensions, are, if willing to be saved by him, and him alone, and in his own way (*l*). Be persuaded to give up yourselves to him to be his, and not your own, any more for ever.

I add,

*Thirdly*, Should you be able to make out your interest in the blood and righteousness of Christ, bless the Lord for it. Do you not know, that the *Lord hath done great things for you already*? Are you not glad of it? (*m*) Are you not inclined to say, *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name* (*n*)? Do you not know, that, being *bought with a price*, even with the invaluable *blood of Christ*, you should *glorify God in your bodies, and with your spirits, which are his*? (*o*) Do you not hear the affectionate *Paul* say, *Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory*? Are you not ready to concur with him? In order that you may properly discharge this duty, endeavour to *walk worthy of God, who, thro' Christ Jesus, hath called you to his kingdom and glory*. *To walk worthy of him, to all well-pleasing* (*p*). To show forth his praise ; and in every respect to have a *conversation according to the gospel* (*q*). *Holding forth the word of life, in a living example*. *Shining as light in the world* (*r*). Thus will you glorify God on earth. This will be *thanks-living* ; acting as becometh saints.

Again,

*Fourthly*, If our friends, who have passed off the

(*l*) John vi. 37. (*m*) Psal. cxxvi. 2, 3. (*n*) Psal. ciii. 1, 2.  
 (*o*) 1 Cor. vi. 20. (*p*) 1 Thess. ii. 14. Col. i. 10.  
 (*q*) 1 Peter ii. 9. Phil. i. 27. (*r*) Phil. ii. 16. Matt. v. 16.

stage of life, were interested in this triumph, how should it reconcile us to their death?

What is there here that calls for the Christian's stay, any longer than to glorify God, and to accomplish his sovereign pleasure? Do not the saints long to *depart hence, and to be with Christ, which is far better* (s). Would it not be cruel to wish our glorified friends back again into this vale of tears, into this world of conflict? Did not our dear-departed Sister, whose death we are now commemorating, suppose it, when, in her death-bed sickness, it was observed to her that she was a little better?—“What! said she, would “you have me to return and enter again upon this “world of sin and temptation!” Was it not the pleasing views she had of the efficacious death of Christ, which caused her so repeatedly to adopt the Apostle's triumphant words in our text? And, as I have been credibly informed by her surviving husband, that she many times said, with seemingly spiritual fervour, *Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory throu' our Lord Jesus Christ.* How reconciling are these considerations? Should we not much rather bless God for making them ready, and taking them to himself, than regret their removal? Let not our selfish principles here prevail, but give place to, and leave room for, the more noble and generous powers of the renewed soul. *In every thing give thanks* (t). This may be a soothing thought to you, my much-esteemed brother, the mourning widower of the deceased; and to all other surviving relatives, and friends. Again,

*Fifthly, Let us be excited to follow them, who, throu' faith and patience, are now inheriting the promises; or, agreeable to the Apostle's advice, let us run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, and re-*

(s) Phil. i. 23. Rev. xxii. 20.

(t) 1 Thess. v. 18.

ceiving the increase of our faith from him, as well as learning invincible patience by his example (u).

Let the *life that we live in the flesh* be by the *faith of the son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us* (w). Let us *endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ*. Be *strong in that grace there is in him* (x). In *patience, let us possess our souls* (y). We shall have trials, and should patiently bear them. If we so *endure them, we are happy* (z). It is a child's mark to be tried, and to *endure with a christian temper* (a). The way to heaven is *throu' much tribulation* (b); and therefore we should arm ourselves, with this *armour of patience*, upon the *right-hand*, and upon the *left*. Being tried, and, by the grace of God, *enduring to the end* (c), we shall receive the promise. Our afflictions, being sanctified, will *work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory* (d). Then hold out in *faith and patience*; their work may be sharp; but it must of necessity be short. Soon *be that shall come will come, and will not tarry* (e).

I only add once more,

*Sixtly and lastly, Thus following them in their faith and patience, we shall shortly overtake them, and be with them in blissful climes for ever.*

*Jesus, to whom we are directed to look, is sat down at the right-hand of the throne of God; where there is neither cross nor shame* (f). *Moses had respect unto the recompence of reward* (g). *Abraham, after patiently enduring, obtained the accomplishment of the promise God made unto him* (b). And so shall it be, Christian, in thy case; for God hath *promised eternal life*, and the end of thy *faith and patience* shall be crowned with the

(u) Heb. xii. 2.	(w) Gal. ii. 20.	(x) 2 Tim. ii. 1. 3.
(y) Luke xxi. 19.	(z) James v. 11.	(a) Heb. xii. 7.
(b) Acts vii. 22.	Rev. vii. 14.	(c) Matth. xxiv. 13.
(d) 2 Cor. iv. 17.	(e) Heb. x. 37.	(f) Heb. xii. 2.
(g) Heb. xi. 26.	(b) Heb. vi. 15.	

fulfilment of it (*i*). Yea, thy soul shall, upon her dismission from the body, be *present with the Lord* (*k*). And the time will soon commence, when the *grave* shall resign its prey, and thy *body* rise glorious, *immortal* and triumphant; never to see *corruption* more, or be a clog to thy active soul. It shall be a *spiritual body*, suited to, and a fit companion for, thy precious soul; and both shall be active in the realms of *bliss*, and service of God, for ever (*l*). *The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the arch angel, and the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; and those that are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we be ever with the Lord* (*m*). And in this chapter, out of which my text is, verse 52, *The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed*.

All the redeemed blood-bought throng shall then be present, and *Jesus*, the adorable Saviour, will say, *Here am I, and the children thou hast given me* (*n*); and so shall they sit down with him to the *marriage-supper of the Lamb*, and feast with him for ever (*o*). Sin being removed, sorrow shall cease (*p*). Now, and not till now, shall the whole of what my text refers to be actually accomplished; *For now shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory* (*q*). The *sting of death* is lost; the *grave* destroyed; and the glorious triumph, which was begun on earth, shall be consummated in heaven. The redeemed company will then, in full chorus, and real concert, begin, and perpetually carry on, the pleasing song which shall never cease (*r*).

(*i*) Tit. i. 2. 1 John ii. 25. (*k*) 2 Cor. v. 8.  
 (*l*) 1 Cor. xv. 42-54. (*m*) 1 Thess. iv. 17. (*n*) If. viii. 18.  
 Heb. ii. 13. (*o*) Matt. xxv. 10. Rev. xix. 7-9.  
 (*p*) Rev. xxi. 4. (*q*) If. xxv. 8. (*r*) If. xxxv. 10.

May God of his infinite mercy grant, that all who heard this discourse from the pulpit, or now read it from the press, may be found numbered with the Happy Assembly !

A M E N AND A M E N.



A N A C R O S T I C,

*Occasioned by the Death of the Person on account  
of whom the preceding Sermon was preached,  
who died in Child-bed, Sept. 14, 1779.*

A H ! where's the stately form, the sprightly  
pow'rs ? }  
N ot here : but gone beyond th' ethereal tow'rs,  
N o more to visit this dark world of ours ! }

W ell, we must soон the pattern imitate,  
E re long, a breathless corps will be our state ;  
T he thought is aweful ; certain is the thing,  
H ere DEATH may come as on an *eagle's* wing.  
E lusive are all earth's most dazzling charms,  
R emove from them, and fly to JESU's arms ;  
I n him the poor and needy ever find  
L argeness of heart, benevolence of mind,  
L ove permanent, and lasting to mankind. }

L et those that have wives be as tho' they'd none,  
 A las ! how short their stay ! how soon they're gone !  
 T hey're turn'd to *dust*, a meal for crawling *worms*,  
 E ffac'd are all their comely pleasing forms.

W e join ourselves in wedlock's sacred bands,  
 I n hopes of strengthening each his fellow's hands ;  
 F erocious DEATH the knot again unties,  
 E luding all our aims, *our help-meet* dies !

O, might we leave this earthly, dusky stage,  
 F ar distant fly beyond this dying age.

S urely rebellious nature here prevails,  
 A cross it leads to what kind Heav'n reveals ;  
 M ust we indulge a fretful murm'ring mind ?  
 U ngrateful ! Still the *Lord our God* is kind.  
 E lapse not back thy Sovereign to offend,  
 L ike to his honour, trust him as thy friend.

W hat, shall the parent of the human race  
 E ver mistake ; his pity e'er erase ;  
 T o turn his children from the chosen way,  
 H is *faithfulness* reverse, his *truth* bewray !  
 E vanish thoughts so vile ; rise far above,  
 R evieuw the wonders of *redeeming love* :  
 I nfer, if possible, when *this* is known,  
 L ax dealings can attend *Jehovah's throne* ;  
 L eave things so mean, and still his kindness own. }

O mniscient is his eye, his hand is strong ;  
 F ear not, tho' *tempests* blow, and *storms* last long.

M atchlefs his *mercy*, boundlefs is his *love* ;  
 I mmense his *wisdom*, reaching far above  
 L ines fram'd by human skill, or creature's art,  
 L engths far beyond what mortals can impart !  
 S how manly courage, act the Christian's faith,  
 H umbly believe what the Almighty saith,  
 A loft let all thy soaring pow'r's arise,  
 W ith sweet submision, yield to God all-wise.

REFLECTION. *vol. I.*

SUCH conduct well becomes the Child of God,  
With steady patience to endure the rod :  
Eternity will all the myst'ry show,  
Which we could ne'er unfold whilst here below.

Compos'd be all our thoughts, nor *once* pretend  
To alter *that* which none can *ever* mend ;  
The ways of God are right, and must remain,  
For ever free from sin's defiling stain.

Tho' clouds and darkness vail his awful throne, when  
Justice and judgment reign in paths unknown ;  
Nor shall the most assiduous searcher find  
A God without compassion, or unkind.

May reason and religion, both possess,  
Our wav'ring minds in scenes of deep distress ;  
To keep them *steady* in the *tryng hour*,  
In firm dependance on almighty power.

